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ELLEN NIELSEN

Miss Ellen Nielsen, whose death at the age of 89 in her home at Takushan, Manchuria, was eported here last October, was commemorated in an article in the Danish Mission Magazine. The article, which consists of excerpts from her letters during the long years of living under a Communist regime, was translated for us from its Norwegian version in the Norwegian Mission Tidings of November 5, 1960, by the Rev. Ralph Mortensen. The letters cover the period from 1946 to 1960.

The first letter, in 1946, tells of the occupation of the mission compound by Communist oldiers, at one time two hundred of them living on the grounds. The first 1950 letter tells of he expropriation of most of the moveable property in the compound. In the second 1950 letter he says that now there is a little more freedom: "Now we have a clergyman, two Bible women, nd an evangelist. Before no church. Now the church is ours. Before no parsonage, now that oo has been returned to us. Now the church looks like it did before: pulpit, altar and most of he pews brought back. Is this not God's grace and answer to prayer? But best of all - the con- regation is waking up. We have just had eight days of revival meetings conducted by two ible women."

In 1953: "We do not have open persecution, since the Government has declared the church s 'permitted'. We look ahead with hope. There must come a time when the Gospel of God's Kingdom can be proclaimed freely to the dear people of China."

In 1954: "Revival meetings have been held for ten consecutive days and everywhere full ouse. Prayer meetings for laborers were held at night, because they have no time during the ay. Four leaders took turns leading the meetings, and there was fire and warmth in the prayers f the Christians. Pastor Shun has decided to remain, and that is of course good. When it is emanded of him in the church to omit certain Scripture passages, his answer is a definite 'No'."

In 1956: "Yesterday Pastor Shun reported from the meeting in Mukden, arranged by the Government. There were 88 delegates in all from the churches, including pastors and fellow- workers, and 33 from the Government. All expenses, travel, board and room, were defrayed y the Government."

Later in 1956: "Teachers and pupils are not allowed to attend the worship services. But here is religious liberty, so that must be understood in another way! Worship services and Sun- ay School are held every Sunday in the church, and no one hinders anyone from attending. At he hospital Christian doctors are appointed and at the school Christian teachers. Whether they ave denied their faith I do not know, but I am afraid they have. Conditions everywhere are

Issued bi-weekly to keep mission boards and missionaries informed on Christian work in China. Information from Chinese church magazines and other Chinese sources is passed on as objectively as possible, with a minimum of interpretation. When interpretation is necessary, it is enclosed in parentheses as the comment of the editor. ANNUAL RATES: Domestic, $2.50; Overseas, Firstclass $4.00, Secondclass $3.00. Airmail $5.00 in 15¢ zone, $7.00 in 25¢ zone.

such that it is difficult to preserve life."

In 1958: "...The pastor has been dismissed and the church is being used as a school. Su-yi does not dare to lead the worship service any longer. The Sunday School is forbidden. No one is allowed to be baptized before the age of fifteen. During the busy seasons on the farm no worship services are held. The land is plowed to a depth of 24-30 inches. Women by the hundred, old and young, are ordered out in the fields, Mr. Wang too was ordered out with that bad arm of his, but he did not go. Most of the Christians never come to church. They are tied down by their work. Mrs. Kung weeps, because they do not get enough to eat. They all eat now in the mess hall of the Commune. They only get a fixed number of bowls of food, which for many is not enough. Now they are establishing children's homes. All school children, big and small, must eat and sleep away from their homes and come home only once a week."

Later in 1958: "Everything is so expensive, but do not be anxious about me. My Heavenly Father knows what I need. Not so few guests come to visit, most of them pagans. I pray God that I may be permitted to lead some to believe in Jesus and be saved. To the group that just left I was privileged to tell the story of my own conversion and of my life with God. They were all eager to hear. When Mr. Wang returns we will discuss how to get a pastor and a Bible woman and how to get the worship services here started again."

In 1960, shortly before her death, and almost blind, she wrote: "For a long time it has been hard to read and write. I could see to prepare food, but to eat it was difficult. I used bluestone (copper sulphate crystals) which gave me great pain, and salt water, etc., but nothing helped. However, a few days ago my eyesight improved. I could see to read the letters from my friends, see to write, and even to play the organ. Now I no longer use bluestone, and have no more pain. My eyes are getting better every day. This is again to me a miracle of God and answer to every evening prayer and the petitions of my dear friends. I thank you all, and especially my faithful Heavenly Father, who does not forget His weak child. Hearty greetings to you all."

And so, with this expression of trust upon her lips this devoted servant of God, the only one of all the missionaries who once were in China to continue at work through these years of Communism, crossed over into the Better Land, and "all the trumpets sounded for her on the other side."

FURTHER DETAILS ON MRS. NYSTROM'S VISIT TO CHINA

American Bible Society Secretary Ralph Mortensen has translated from the Swedish three short articles by Mrs. Ester Nystrom describing what she saw in China. These do not add appreciably to the summary which we gave in the February 13 Bulletin, but the details she gives do make the picture much more vivid. The first article is as follows:

"It is Sunday, the second of October, 1960. In a festival-clad (because it is the day after Independence Day, October 1) congregation I am sitting as a listener. It is the Mi Shih T'ang in Peking. It is built in beautiful Chinese style and formerly belonged to the missionary society known as Sheng Kung Hui. (That is, Anglican, but she is mistaken there. This was a Church of Christ in China church.) At present it belongs to the United Protestant Church in China. (Note how she speaks as though the union has been actually accomplished. Actually the denominations still retain their identity while worshiping together.) Every seat is taken. The congregation consists of older and younger persons, with men seemingly most heavily represented. Even children are present. In the front on the altar stands a cross, gold-painted, and above it, the symbol of the Christian Church, there shine the three Chinese characters for Faith, Hope and Charity. The organ and the piano are situated on either side. Looking up the eye catches a glimpse of the reredos, carved in rosewood, from which deep red satin drapes hang. These form an effective background for the above mentioned Chinese characters.

"A woman organist plays all of the music accompaniments. My eye views the Christian congregation. Each person, by and large, has his own Bible with him, and his own hymnal, printed in the new simplified Chinese characters. (That means that there must have been a new edition of the hymnal since the simplified characters were introduced.) The speaker's message grips; he is in addition to his pastoral duties Doctor of Theology, and teaches in the Theological Seminary (Peking), where forty-six are now studying. After a hymn and prayer two texts are

read, 2 Cor. 12 and John 12:48-52. Then comes an evangelical message, the bread of life for life's journey. Following this the Confession of Faith and the Lord's Prayer are said by the whole congregation in concert. The closing hymn is sung in unison.

"Immediately following this service the Holy Communion is celebrated. No one leaves the church pews except those who are to take part. During subdued piano music group after group go forward to the altar rail. The same text is used here as in Sweden and the bread and the wine are blessed. In each one's hand is placed a wafer, which later is dipped in the wine. I realized in truth holy fellowship with a group of China's Christians.

"The previous Sunday, when I had just arrived in Peking, I attended the morning worship service in the Kang Wu Shih church, where the President of the Theological Seminary preached. The preaching was evangelical, although the language was different from what we listen to in our Christian churches. After the service I was invited to a tea party in the assembly hall, and that was an unforgettable hour for me. I felt that I was really welcome and many questions were asked and answered by several different persons.

"But before leaving Peking I wished to visit the Methodist Church, where my husband spoke during the Conference of 1956. Now the church is called Chu Shih K'ou T'ang. In this church another liturgical form was used, but even that was evangelical. Also here I was privileged to partake of the Lord's Supper and later speak with several of the participants.

"These worship services bear witness to the fact that the Christian Chinese congregation exists and that it mediates in a materialistic age the message of Christ to the world. My personal experience in Peking I reckon as God's blessing to me and I am humbly thankful for it."

Her second and third articles describe Shanghai and Nanking respectively. After paying tribute to the way in which Shanghai has been cleaned up both physically (slums being rebuilt, no beggars, no ownerless curs) and morally (no alcoholism, gangsterism nor prostitution), she tells of worshiping in three of Shanghai's twenty-two churches, "all of which have joined the so-called Protestant Church Union," but mentions only one of them by name, the Community Church. The pastor, Li Chu-wen, entertained her for dinner on the 19th floor of the Park Hotel after the service, and during the dinner conversation she was told about the problems that arose in connection with the establishment of a Chinese Church. "From the beginning no one knew what position the Government would take with respect to religious freedom. Membership in the churches as a result shrank, but gradually as the situation became stabilized and the law concerning religious liberty enacted, they now happily report an increase in church membership. As already stated most Protestant churches are affiliated with the Church Union, among these are all of the congregations established through Swedish initiative." (This is the first indication we have had that the union is not all-inclusive.) She saw something of YM and YW work in Shanghai, and calls it "really imposing," with spacious buildings for gatherings and studies, reading rooms visited daily by about six hundred young people, and libraries loaning books to two thousand persons per day. She was impressed by the beauty of a picture of Christ, painted by a modern Chinese artist, which hangs on the wall of one of these buildings. "May it be a blessing to many who view it even as it was a blessing to me."

Her visit to Nanking is described quite fully in my February summary. Her train was ferried across the river from Pukow, and arrived on time in the huge modern railway station in Nanking. Bishop and Mrs. K. H. Ting and others were there to greet her. The next morning she toured the city seeing the sights. "Our tour of the city had been announced in the local press, consequently the Christians in the various places we visited were prepared and received us with great friendliness." After the tour she was taken to the home of Bishop and Mrs. Ting and to the Seminary. "Both Bishop Ting and his wife are worthy representatives of Christendom in China today." Of Mrs. Ting she says that she teaches in the University of Nanking; and of the bishop: "My conversations with Bishop Ting impressed me. His dignified and humble presentation inspired confidence." While there she met also a youth pastor who works among the youth of Nanking.

"My conversations with Bishop Ting and his wife were an enriching experience. They revealed the fact that the Christians in China are forging ahead with the same goal as that of Christians in Sweden, namely, to serve Jesus Christ here on earth."

FOOD IN CHINA

Conflicting reports continue to come in about the food situation in mainland China. J. W. Dyson, formerly Methodist missionary in Soochow, writes from Taiwan that a recent arrival escaped from the mainland states that after grain for export and for the army has been taken there is not enough for the people, and that "the aged and the infants are dying at the highest rate, but all of the civilian population are suffering too."

On the other hand, Miss Maud Russell quotes a letter from Peking, written by Rewi Alley on December 29, 1960, in which he says, "The people of North China have parcelled out the grain shortage caused by the two bad droughts, and no one will die. Often the older folk give more to the young ones than they should perhaps. It has been superbly managed and the city folks made to feel that they are part and parcel of the whole land - not something that is exempt, as in the old days. Actually many of the young folks look better than they did before the anti-waste campaign started. There is now the effort to save on everything possible."

Miss Russell recognizes that China needs to buy food at present, but insists that China is not in the position of needing calamity aid. "The People's Republic of China has the funds with which to buy food on the world market."

This point of view is confirmed by a letter which I have just seen from mainland China, dated February 1, 1961. I am not allowed to quote from it, but I can state that although a little more realistic and less starry-eyed than some reports from inside China about the ideal life there it is just as insistent as Mr. Alley and Miss Russell that the Government will buy whatever it needs to make up an adequate ration for its people.

A NEW CHINA ATLAS BEING PREPARED

Dr. Chiao-min Hsieh, Associate Professor of Geography at Catholic University in Washington has been given a grant by the Social Science Research Council to assist in making an up-to-date atlas of mainland China. His wife Mrs. Jean Kan Hsieh, who is a specialist in geography and cartography, will assist in the project.

The RNS news item reporting this project adds that Dr. Hsieh said that for the past ten years China has been engaged in a program of rapid industrialization which it has sought to conceal from Western eyes. This sentence seems strange in view of the constant propaganda from the mainland telling in great detail of the information which he proposes to incorporate into the atlas: new railroads and highways, new airports and water control projects, new industrial regions and urban centers. However, he is said to be one of the world's top authorities on the geography of the Far East, so we shall await his volume with great interest. In the meantime, our best source of geographic information on the mainland of China continues to be the volume previously reported in the Bulletin, and which we refer to regularly: China, Provisional Atlas of Communist Administrative Units, prepared by the Central Intelligence Agency in 1959, and distributed by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Technical Services, Washington 25 D.C., at a cost of $5.00.

MISSIONARY NEWS

Mrs. George H. Pearson, formerly British Methodist missionary in Paoking, Hunan, died in Birmingham, England, on February 19. Rev. Sven Wisloff Nilssen, born of missionary parents and himself a missionary of the Norwegian Missionary Society in Anhua in north central Hunan, died in Oslo on October 23, 1960 at the age of 49.

CHURCH NEWS

RNS on February 16 reported two items of news about Catholic progress in Singapore. The first is that the twentieth Roman Catholic Church to serve the 50,000 Catholics of Singapore has been built under Jesuit auspices. The second is that the Sisters of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood have opened a hospital, built at a cost of $500,000.

The noted violinist, Dr. Teng Chang-kuo, recently joined the Roman Catholic Church, apparently as a result of his engagement to a Japanese Catholic pianist. Dr. Teng is Director of the National Musical Research Institute and President of the National Academy of Arts and Craft in Taipei.